

# Building and Maintaining A Successful Board of Directors

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# Building a Strong Board

A strong board is the  
key to a successful  
organization



# Board Responsibilities

- Determine the organization's mission and purpose
- Ensure effective organizational planning
- Ensure adequate resources
- Manage resources effectively
- Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services
- Enhance the organization's public image
- Assess its own performance

# Start With the Basics

Find people with a passion for your park

Where are they?

At the park (duh!), especially at your events

Involved in a youth sports club

At local schools

In the garden club

In line at the bank and grocery store

They own a local business



# Identify Board Members Who Can Deliver on Your Goals and Needs

- What are your program focuses?
  - Events = Organized person with great ideas
  - Volunteer work = A person who enjoys rounding up the troops and knows lots of people and groups
  - Environmental data collection and or/nature interpretation = professional or hobbyist naturalists, environmental educators
  - Marketing the park = Effective communicators with good contacts

# Identify Board Members Who Can Deliver on Your Goals and Needs

What are your fundraising needs?

- Capital improvements
- Events in the park
- Maintenance endowment
- Staff for your organization

Don't be afraid to think big!!



Who can meet those needs?

- Local business people
- People with large financial resources
- People who feel comfortable asking for money
- People who have great connections

# Ensure Your Board is Diverse

- Age diversity: Does your board include youth, 20-40 somethings, retirees?
- Geographic diversity: Look outside the park's immediate neighborhood
- User diversity: You'll attract more members if they know their interests are represented
- Ethnic/racial diversity: Parks are enjoyed by all peoples. Does your board reflect that?

# Set Expectations for Board Members

- Attend meetings
- Support events/pitch in when needed
- Raise and/or give money
- Don't be afraid to speak with underperforming members--they're hard on morale



# Cultivate New Leaders

- Your founding group isn't going to be around forever--plan for the future
- New leaders bring new ideas
- New leaders bring new connections and contacts
- New leaders can help deflate any perception of cliquishness

# Conduct a Periodic Evaluation

- Embrace the opportunity to examine and improve your board and organization
- Identify any gaps in your board that should be filled
- Are your organizational goals being met?
- Establish new goals



# More Ideas for Board Members

- Law enforcement officials
- Teachers
- Lawyers
- Bankers
- Recreation equipment retailers
- Tourism officials and chamber of commerce members
- Young parents of school-aged kids
- Health care professionals
- Accountants
- Teens
- Service club members
- Church leaders

# Membership is Next

- Search for new members for your organization in the same places you're looking for board members
- Strategically target your membership appeals
  - Who is making the ask? Is there someone on the board with a connection to the potential member(s)?
  - Tailor your message to the audience (e.g., great trails to recreation enthusiasts, safe place for family fun to families)
  - Personal is better than paper

# Money Isn't Everything--Ask for Lots of Money

- Recognize that people have different interests in their membership
  - Just want to write a check to support
  - Just want to volunteer
  - Provide a link to members/volunteers/money
- Provide opportunities for more than a minimum donation

# Survey Your Members' Interests

- Follow up with members who don't renew
- Survey informally or in writing
- Be open to new ideas
- Capitalize on expressions of interest

# Resources

- BoardSource: [www.BoardSource.org](http://www.BoardSource.org)
- Board Development:  
[www.BoardDevelopment.org](http://www.BoardDevelopment.org)
- Center for Civic Partnerships:  
[www.civicpartnerships.org](http://www.civicpartnerships.org)

# Have Fun!!

